

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00
SP-02 EUR-08 IO-06 L-01 PM-03 DODE-00 /055 W
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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1543
INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 5232

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, BH, UK, GT
SUBJ: GUATEMALAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S PLANS TO VISIT BELIZE

1. FOREIGN MINISTER CASTILLO VALDEZ TOLD ME SEPTEMBER 5 ABOUT HIS PLANS TO MAKE A PRIVATE VISIT TO BELIZE AS A FIRST STEP IN TRYING TO OVERCOME BARRIERS OF COMMUNICATION WHICH MIGHT LEAD EVENTUALLY TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING WITH BELIZEAN LEADERS. HE SAID THAT BRITISH HAD CONVEYED HIS IDEA TO BELIZEANS WHO WELCOMED FOREIGN MINISTER'S ATTITUDE BUT FELT THAT A VISIT IN THE POLITICALLY CHARGED ATMOSPHERE IN THE DAYS PRIOR TO BELIZE'S NATIONAL CELEBRATION ON SEPTEMBER 10 MIGHT LEAD TO POLITICAL COMMENT WHICH WOULD BE UNHELPFUL WITH RESPECT TO THE PROPOSED MEETING BETWEEN GUATEMALAN, BRITISH AND BELIZEAN REPRESENTATIVES IN NEW YORK LATER IN SEPTEMBER. BELIZEANS WERE SUGGESTING THAT THE INITIAL CONTACTS SHOULD BE MADE AT THE NEW YORK MEETING AND THAT THEY WOULD THEN WELCOME A SUBSEQUENT VISIT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO BELIZE FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL TALKS IN NEW YORK.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS ALSO SIGNIFICANT THAT THE BELIZE GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED THE BRITISH TO ASSURE HIM
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THAT THEY WOULD DO NOTHING TO INFLAME THE PRESENT ATMOSPHERE. THIS, HE EMPHASIZED, WAS A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT POINT.

3. HE TOLD ME THAT NO DATE HAD YET BEEN FIXED FOR THE NEW YORK MEETING BUT THAT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE THIRD WEEK OF SEPTEMBER. HE SAID HE ASSUMED HE WOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE HIS VISIT TO BELIZE IN OCTOBER.

4. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD FELT FOR SOME TIME THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BREAK OUT OF THE RELATIVE ISOLATION WHICH CHARACTERIZED GUATEMALA'S TIES WITH BELIZE AND TRY TO PROMOTE INCREASING EXCHANGES AND FLOWS OF EVERYTHING -- PEOPLE, CAPITAL, TECHNOLOGY. AFTER A YEAR OR SO OF SUCH EXCHANGES, HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO TRANSFORM THE ATMOSPHERE SUFFICIENTLY THAT BOTH SIDES COULD THINK OF MUTUALLY CONVENIENT ARRANGEMENTS. THE BELIZEANS COULD LEARN THAT THEY HAD NOTHING TO FEAR FROM THE GUATEMALANS.

5. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE PLANNED TO LEAVE FOR NEW YORK ON SEPTEMBER 17.
BOSTER

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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